

NORTHERN UFO NEWS



NORTHERN UFO NEWS: Monthly newsletter of the Northern UFO Network (NUFON)
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Editorial Address: 23 Sunningdale Drive Irlam Salford M30 6NJ

Cover designed by John Watson (CHRYSLIS)

Edited by Jenny Randles (MUFORA)

News Editor: David Rees (MAPIT)

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 W.Yorks, Gwynedd, Staffs, West Midlands, Leicestershire.

EDITORIAL: "Another Network?"

NUFON has had its share of problems in 1979, with the departure of two active groups (FUFOR & MAPIT) for obscure reasons. However, I feel it still fulfills a distinctive and unique role in UK ufology - acting as a bridge that links groups together and provides a community within which they can participate without sacrificing their individual independence. The loose-knit structure which NUFON has developed to preserve this freedom has had both advantages and disadvantages.

One aim has always been a British Network system, but attempts to set up a counterpart SUFON have failed dismally (and the latest effort by WATSUP member John Makin whilst not dead appears dormant). In the face of this I now hear word of moves to set up a 'British UFO Group Network', involving our ex-patriots FUFOR plus several respected southern groups (including UFO INFO in Warminster, SKYSSAN in Worcester and UFO INTERNATIONAL in Bristol) So far relatively little information has reached me, but a meeting is planned for mid-September I gather.

Clearly the idea is valid - and is just what NUFON has aimed towards all these years. Yet the scheme seems to be developing 'apart from' NUFON - which is a pity, begging as it does the question of whether the intention is to produce an alternative or rival to us. Surely the last thing ufology needs now is another, totally distinctive, body to add to the already overcrowded ranks of UFO systems in Britain.

What seems oddest to me is that such a first rate idea is developing in such comparative secrecy. NUFON has 18 groups presently associated and yet, so far as I can discover, nobody knows anything about this 'Network'. I would presume that the only fair and logical method of planning and creating such a system would be to convene (at a central point such as the Midlands) a meeting where every active UK group was invited to send representatives. Naturally many groups are ephemeral and the support would be nothing like unanimous, but at least the attendance would be representative of active British group ufology.

Now it may be that this will transpire once the instigators of this idea decide to come into the open with their plans. It simply remains a problem to define the NUFON (and associate Midlands Network) role in all this, since it seems that at present we are not to be involved in any discussions concerning the scheme. I trust the organisers would appreciate the efficacy of organisation on a regional basis (indeed talks of further sub-sections within NUFON - such as a North Eastern network - have occurred). This, combined with overall cohesion into a British Network would be of great advantage.

Bearing all this in mind I think it true to say that NUFON could fit into any embryonic national scheme provided both sides realise that flexibility will be called for. I am sure that those involved with NUFON administration, and the administration of NUFON groups would be prepared to accommodate, and welcome, these plans provided they are moves towards liaison and cooperation (such as NUFON has served to try to promote) and not diversification and competition. In such a case this could prove a most exciting development in UK ufology.

(Terry Hooper of UFO INTERNATIONAL would be interested in any views on the development of this 'network', if you can give them him before mid September:-
 63 Malvern Drive, North Common, Warmley, Bristol, Avon.

So far NO articles on the theme 'UFO Research - What should we do?' have been received (in contrast to 8 articles on the last theme). Come on you serious ufologists out there get thinking. Copy for the October issue should be in by September 25. Surely some of you have some ideas!

NEWS REVIEW:

:: CHRYISIS have recently been assisting with a TV series on UFOs, entitled "Summer Skywatch". Unfortunately (or fortunately?) this was cut short by the ITV strike. CHRYISIS were not very impressed by the format, which apparently concentrated too heavily on the extraterrestrial hypothesis. That, sadly, is the way of the media.

:: MUFORA, meantime, have been getting some local publicity too- tying in with the publication of the book "UFOs: A British Viewpoint" by Jenny Randles & Peter Warrington.

:: CUFORO (one of the participants in the East Midland mini-network) advise a change of address. They may now be contacted as follows:-

Mark Brown 18 York Place, Agar Nook, Coalville, Leicestershire

:: Another Midland address change to note. Kevin McClure, UFOIN coordinator of the UAFOL team, now is at:-

8 Scotland Rd, Little Bowden, Market Harborough, Leics (Tel: M.H. 31087)
Kevin, incidentally, is involved with a working party that has been set up by the Society for Psychical Research working with the committee of BUFORA on 'psychic overlap' cases, providing parapsychologists as support on UFO investigations.

:: Although it occurred some time ago I have just been advised of the death of Ufologist Dave Gittens. Older NUFON participants will recall Dave and his Cheshire group NAPRA, which was one of the founder participants of the network. Paul Larkin, who took over all the files is now joining forces with Merseyside group MICAP.

BRITISH UFO MAGAZINES - Checklist, September 1979

FSR (West Malling, Maidstone, Kent) Bi-monthly 32pp glossy litho £4.85pa
MUFOB (64 Alric Ave, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4JW) Quarterly, 16pp litho £1.75pa
FORTEAN TIMES (DTWAGE, 9-12 St Annes Ct, London W1) Quarterly, 56pp litho 75p
STRANGE PHENOMENA (19 Oaks Crescent, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton, West Midlands) Monthly, 38pp litho 75p

The above four represent independant magazines (one other, CNK, ceases publication this Winter) FSR features international reports and articles. MUFOB is primarily concerned with UFOs as a human experience (ie psychological and sociological implications). FORTEAN TIMES continues summaries and articles of paranormal phenomena in the witty style of Charles Fort. STRANGE PHENOMENA combines UFOs, other paranormal phenomena and psychic aspects together.

MAGIC SAUCER (8 Ely Close, Habberley Estate, Kidderminster, Worcs) Duplicated 28p bi-monthly 25p

UFO RESEARCH REVIEW (443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB) Litho, bi-monthly £1.10pa

IRISH UFO NEWS (19 Cairnshill Ave, Belfast, N. Ireland BT8 4NR) Quarterly litho 32pp £3.00 pa

The above are general magazines of excellent standard. MAGIC SAUCER is written especially for 'young Ufologists', with contributions from leading workers. UFO RESEARCH REVIEW covers the nuts & bolts practicalities of UFO investigation.

CHRYISIS (48 Britannia Place, Dormanstown, Cleveland) bi-monthly photocopied

SKYWATCH (MAPIT 92 Hillcrest Rd, Stockport, Cheshire) bi-monthly duplicated

UFO INSIGHT (FUFOR 2 Acer Ave, Crewe, Cheshire) quarterly duplicated

PROTEUS (UFOSIS 92 Hardware St West Bromwich) quarterly duplicated

QUEST (UFOI 160 Courtney Rd, Bristol BS15 2RN) 20pp duplicated bi-monthly

ESSEX UFO.SG. JOURNAL (16 Raydons Rd, Dagenham, Essex) 34pp quarterly duplicated

The above are group magazines. There are one or two others, but these are the ones published consistantly. Others tend to be sporadic. Costings are available from individual groups. BUFORA and CONTACT, the two national associations, publish their own magazines (bi-monthly litho and quarterly duplicated respectively). These are only available to members, however.

MAGAZINE ROUND-UP

FSR Vol 25 No 2 features the Denbigh CE1 on the cover, a CHRYSIS investigation and a new ETH based theory. BUFORA JOURNAL (June 79) usual news and reports plus LINCON preview. CNK Jun/Jul 79 origins of man, anti-gravity, plus UFO stories MAGIC SAUCER Jun/Jul 79 articles and reports from the midlands. QUEST Jun/Jul 79 Full report on the Lowestoft CE3, cases from USA and France.

NEW BOOKS:

"The UFONAUTS" Hans Holzer Panther Paperbacks 95p 1979

A new look at old favourite CE3 cases. There is almost no new material in the book, despite repeated promises that it is not going to just be a rehash. It has some remarkable statements in it, such as 'these spacecraft are piloted by intelligent beings', but provides no justification for most of them. Great stuff if you like reading classic UFO stories, but there's not much else in it.

"LIFETIDE" Lyall Watson Hodder & Stoughton Hardback 1979

The fourth in Dr Watson's series of looks at paranormal phenomena, but this one features his views and theories about UFOs. He very much favours the Vallee viewpoint, and argues that UFOs (along with ghosts and many other similar phenomena) are produced by the subconscious (the 'Lifetide' as he calls it)

"The UNINVITED" Clive Harold Star Paperbacks 1979

The South Wales escapades of contactee Pauline Coombs and family written in journalistic style as a 'mystery story'. Entertaining to read, but totally without ufological depth (hardly suprising as the writer is no ufologist). If you are already familiar with the stories then there will be little new. Perhaps best to wait for Randall Jones-Pugh's book in October. This promises more than just the stories, but analysis thereof.

UFOIN team members seem to be getting into the writing habit. Following Randall Jones-Pugh's book 'The Dyfed Enigma' in October, autumn 1980 will bring two more. Robert Hale will be publishing a book by Jenny Randles and Neville Spearman will produce a book by Frank Johnson on an amazing CE4 investigation from Oxfordshire.

STRANGENESS RATINGS.... A proposal by William Hayes of UAPROL

This appears to be a laudable attempt to provide objective assessment of subjective criteria, proposed and applied by UAPROL in their investigations. It seems to combine well with other such ideas being utilised at the moment (eg. Investigation Level). The basic proposal is as follows:

Split each case into 'criteria' viz SHAPE, COLOUR, LUMINOSITY, SIZE, SPEED, MANOEUVRABILITY, SOUNDLESSNESS (or odd sounds?), MODE OF (DIS)APPEARANCE, INSTRUMENTATION EFFECTS (eg on a camera), WITNESS EFFECTS. If a case can be classed as strange within each criteria it is awarded one point (to a maximum of 9) This is termed the SR (Strangeness rating). Next a factor known as the WG (Witness Groupings) is calculated from the number of independant groups of witnesses separately reporting the phenomenon. Finally the witness numbers in toto, WN, are used. A PROBABILITY RATING OF THE STRANGENESS can then be calculated from the multiplication of SR x WG x WN. The higher the figure the more probable the strangeness of encounter. For example case 78-231 (p 4 of August issue) has a rating of 5 (the SR) x 1 (the WG) x 2 (WN) = 10. (A very simple single witness LITS might have a rating as low as 1). However, the Northants car-stop (see p5 of same issue) has a rating of 8 (the SR) x 2 (the WG) x 5 (the WN) = 80 - clearly much stranger.

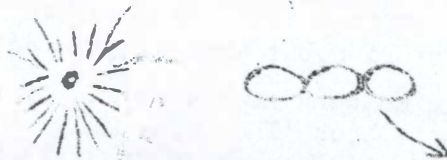
William Hayes acknowledges that some people might think a weighting should be applied to some of the criteria (eg witness effects given 2 points etc), but it would be interesting to see the comments of groups to what seems to offer promise of being a worthwhile addition to our search for scientific study of the data. Your ideas on this scheme would be appreciated by Northern UFO News.

LOW DEFINITION ACTIVITY

<u>Ref</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Investigated</u>	<u>Eval</u>
7960	Jul 9	02.00	St Helens, Msyside	C	MIGAP	Aircraft
Steadily moving fuzzy bright white light heading NW. Man & Wife witness.						
7961	Jul 11	22.00	Rainhill, Msyside	C	MIGAP	Insuff
Fuzzy orange ball seen moving slowly for 3 mins, SW, by single male witness						
7962	Aug 6	23.15	Winsford, Cheshire	B	UFORA	Insuff
Seven witnesses to W LITS that moved slowly towards NE, changed to deep red.						
7963	Aug 15	21.30	Bolton, Gtr Manchester	B	MUFORA	Lightning
White streak of light seen by two children, W LITS passed from cloud to cloud.						

Case 7957 "The Stars that moved" Investigation: Mark & Graham Birdsall

Witness is 31 yr old textile worker Graham Mitchell who lives in Morley, W. Yorks. Being injured and unable to sleep on his bad back for several weeks he took up astronomy and watched the sky most nights in early 1979. Early am Jan 5 he saw his first UFO. A star suddenly appeared in the sky then dropped several degrees, where it hovered for 1 hour. It then rose again, hovered, fell again and moved. At 01.40 on Jan 11 he heard a noise like a generator, which lasted until 03.10. At the precise moment it stopped a group of about six stars (that he had 'plotted' on a map earlier) burst free and streaked out of sight into various parts of the sky. At 19.05 that night a huge dark mass glided over his home, consisting of two orange lights at the fore, and many white lights underneath. He says it was 'dangerously low' (estimates 30 feet). The wierdest event occurred Jan 26 at 19.45 (cf the Denbigh CE1 in FSR Vol 25 No 2). A brilliant star he had been watching for some time 'exploded' with white streamers coming from it. Through his binoculars he watched a 'black hole' form in the centre. Four minutes later the streamers drew inwards and the hole was gone. By the side of the star, however, were three egg shaped lights, larger than the star and joined together. They descended, hovered for 20 minutes and then moved off towards Batley. The finale came on Feb 11 at dusk. With a friend walking a dog they saw two orange lights mid way up the side of Kirkstall Power Station. After several minutes they descended slightly, hovered, and rose again slowly vanishing into the sky. The investigators found no reason to doubt the sincerity of the witness, but the psychological implications of this case are not easy to see.



MEDIUM DEFINITION ACTIVITY

7344	Oct	06.05	Hazel Grove, Gtr McR	B	MUFORA	Insuff
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Witness, an engineer in his 40's, reported sighting he made with 30 Others on station. For five minutes they observed two amber ovals changing shape and moving about in random fashion in a general area of sky. There was no sound. Size about $\frac{1}{4}$ full moon.

78-233	Oct 8	22.30	Bangor, Gwynedd	B	K. Babbs	Insuff
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PC and fiance observed yellow fuzzy oval over Anglesey. Moved slowly for 5 mins, size of 2p piece at arms length. Vanished into thin air. This report seemingly cooberates the events described in case 78-143 (see also FSR Vol 25 No 1)

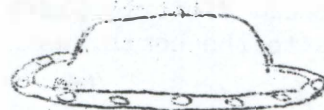
Case 6616 "The Supersonic barrage-balloon!" Invest: Mark & Graham Birdsall

A young woman driving a opentop car towards a railway bridge at South Stainley, North Yorkshire had a strange encounter. She was travelling the Harrogate-Ripon road on a sunny, warm evening about 6pm (date unknown, Summer 1966). Atop the bridge she saw an object that was like a grey metal balloon with flickering lights round the edge. It bulged in the centre and spanned the bridge width. It hovered for 2-3 minutes as she and other drivers stopped to watch it. Then she drove slowly towards it, and as she came almost right underneath it it shot away at terrific speed. By the time she came out of the other side of the bridge it was nowhere in sight.



Case 6812 "Another Teenage Witness" Investigation: Martin Keatman (UFORA)

These events took place on an unknown date around November 1968, time 21.00 approx. The location was Trentham, Staffs - close to the lovely Trentham Gardens. The witness, now 24, is Debra Nithsdale. She was coming home from a youth club and only a few yards from her house when a loud noise, not unlike a high pitched or whining jet aircraft engine, began. She looked up at a row of trees by her side and hovering directly above these was a classic UFO shaped object. Height was estimated as 40 feet, with an angular dimension of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet at arms length! (It was extremely close to her side) It seemed to be made of shiny metal with a real diameter of about ten feet. The base was flat, with a shallow hat shaped dome on top. There were no windows or protrusions, but a row of white lights encircled the bottom and these flashed on and off, in a rotational pattern, quite fast. After watching for about 20 seconds she fled home. At that instant the object shot away with tremendous acceleration to the north east. No other witnesses came forward and nobody else appears to have heard the noise despite residential surroundings. Debra does claim to have smelt what she believes is her dead grandmothers perfume and also a glass fly through a window without anyone touching it. RCM = 8 M, S



Case 78-237 "Shape changing sausage at Stone" Inv: Maryin Keatman (UFORA)

One single witness, a 22 yr old pottery manager, is involved. He was driving from Stafford to Stone at 01.30 on October 7 1978. Approaching the Lichfield roundabout he spotted a yellow sausage shape at 15 degree elevation in front. This was half the size of the full moon and had several brighter yellow areas on it. These seemed to beam light to the ground (see Marple Childrens Home case in FSR Vol 23 No 4) As he approached and rounded the roundabout he kept the object in sight - still stationary in the north- for about 40 seconds. He then got out and the object just 'switched off', but was replaced almost immediately by a series of lights at 30 degree elevation. There was a base line of green lights with a red dome on top. The size was similar to the original object. The mass now moved off south, climbing slowly to 45 degree elevation, where it levelled off. Some of the red lights went out, and it continued to move away silently (there was no other traffic on the road to block the sound) It was in view a further 4 minutes. This case must be classified Insufficient Data. RCM= 8 M, S



2nd

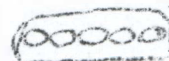
1st

Case 78-238 "UFO watches fireworks display" Inv: Martin Keatman (UFORA)

Sightings on November 5th may be considered dubious because of the presence of many fireworks, but this account seems to preclude an explanation and involves a phenomenon plus solid lightbeam. It occurred at Wolverhampton, West Midlands at 19.05 as two people (a man and woman) were putting a car away and watching some of the fireworks in the clear night sky. Suddenly they saw a light at 70 degree elevation in the SW and noticed it was moving slowly towards them. It was a ball of solid light that glowed with a strange bright pinkness. Apparent size was like that of the full moon and as it passed almost directly overhead at an estimated 1000 feet or so they believe real size was small (they think similar to a football). The object moved silently and smoothly, and as it approached the witnesses noted a beam of light being projected from the base. This was a similar colour (possibly a little brighter) and rotated slowly. It was conical and solid (in the sense that it blocked out the sky behind it). One witness says he looked up into the beam at one point, another says she saw it strike the ground. In general it seems to have the typical solid light mid-air cut off. The object moved away northwards and climbed into the sky, accelerating away very fast. Duration was 4 minutes. This fits in remarkably well with case 78-150 (Dec 78 NUN) where a 'bright red searchlight' was seen at 19.15 at Latchford, Warrington (60 Miles North). Andy Collins and Parasearch also came up with a report from a 35 year old woman who is 'highly psychic' and who in December 78 saw a large cigar with windows glide past her bedroom window (duration 8 secs) She lives in Wolverhampton 200 yards away from the above sighting location!

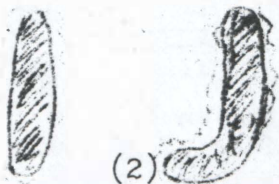


Nov 5



Dec

At one stage it looked as if this was going to turn out to be a most significant observation, due to the possibility of an almost unique kind of evidence. Alas it did not turn out that way. At 22.00 on what was a fine evening with scattered cloud 14 yr old Victoria Clark observed a yellow/gold vertical strip of light over some trees to the north. Rushing home she went with her mother to a bedroom which



(1) offered open views to the north and watched the strange phenomenon slowly move north west in a curving path. At 22.10 Mrs Clark telephoned Brian Fishwick of MIGAP and spoke to him briefly before returning to the UFO. Brian looked from his location (5 miles south) but saw nothing. He then called Liverpool ATC who advised they had nothing but a jet passing eastwards at 25,000 feet. Its trail illuminated by the setting sun had caused some reports from Runcorn, but they had also had one call from St Helens which was not the trail (as most definitely was not the thing the Clarke's were viewing). Meanwhile through the open window both Victoria and Mrs Clark photographed the phenomenon (Victoria using an instamatic, Mrs Clark using an SLR camera). They watched the phenomenon until 22.17, with it changing to a 'J' shape in the latter stages. The film was obtained and processed under supervision by Kodak. Both pictures clearly show the trees, skyline and cloud but no UFO is visible in either - despite the apparent clarity and size of the object the witnesses viewed. Was it simply that the image was too faint to record, or was there another reason? The village has played host to several UFO encounters in recent years. Cause of the phenomenon UNKNOWN..... Case 7959 (6 M,P,S) Level A

MULTI-WITNESS PHENOMENA AT LEICESTER Sept 12 1978 MED/ CE1 UAPROL

These events occurred in 5 phases and are thus reminiscent of the East Lothian sightings of May 1977 (FSR Vol 24 No 3). A total of 17 witnesses are recorded in the report compiled by William Hayes. The object/s seen appear very similar in all phases. Phase 1 (20.10) Twilight sky clear with patchy cloud. Four teenage boys saw a red light from Croft meander about the sky in random fashion for 10 minutes. One boy decided to photograph it, but the object (despite being visible to the naked eye) was not visible through the camera lens. He took the picture anyway, but it showed just empty sky. Meantime a married couple saw a similar thing (with a dark body at the front) crossing the Leicester sky. Phase 2 (20.30) A large group of witnesses saw and tried to follow and orange rugby ball which manoeuvred about the sky. A couple some distance away also saw it, as an aircraft crossed its path and it floated downwards. Phase 3 began at 21.30 and involved a red object with red flashing light. It was seen for some minutes and the couple involved in phase 2 saw it also, reporting it as identical to the first object they had seen. By Phase 4 (22.35) there was more cloud cover. Paul Clayton, a UAPROL investigator, spotted a red object with erratically flashing lights, move about in stop start fashion and then drop to earth like a stone. He called UAPROL and set off to investigate. Reaching the gravel pits where he thought it had landed at 22.50. Here it suddenly appeared right in front of him almost on the ground. It was a reddish orange oval about 20 feet wide and 16 feet high. He felt 'in a daze and as though I were floating on air'. After 10 seconds it simply vanished. Meantime UAPROL had dispatched another investigator, Timothy Carver, who with the two witnesses to the phases 2 and 3 set off for the area of the close encounter. Here Phase 5 occurred. At 23.30 they saw a red light fall from the sky slowly in a 'falling leaf' motion, hover and then move away fast. No identification for these phenomena was forthcoming. Investigated by: R.J. Shepherd, P.J. Clayton, A. Garnett & T.J. Carver... Case 78-236 (8 M,S) Level A/B



TOTAL REPORTS: 14 Insufficient data 7 Aircraft 1 Lightning 1 UFO 5 (36%)

SKYWATCH: UFO INTERNATIONAL are holding a skywatch on the night of Sept 22-23. Any NUFON groups who would like to participate are asked to contact Terry Hoper (63 Malvern Dr., N. Common, Warmley, Bristol AVON) with details.